

# INFORMATION LETTER

## NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION

Not for  
Publication

For Members  
Only

No. 698

Washington, D. C.

May 24, 1938

### TWO-DAY MEETING OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS HELD IN WASHINGTON

#### Can Size Simplification, Labeling, and Public Relations Among Subjects Acted Upon

The Spring meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Canners Association was held in Washington on May 19 and 20, preceded by meetings of the Administrative Council, the Committees on Home Economics, Labeling, Simplification of Containers, Statistics and Information, and Legislation. At the Board meeting there were present, upon invitation, the chairmen of eight of the commodity sections and representatives of twenty State, regional, and commodity canners' associations. The Board meeting thus furnished an opportunity for expression of views from all branches of the industry and from canners in all sections of the country. The Board—

Approved the final budget for the operation of the Association during the current year.

Authorized the Committee on Simplification of Containers to continue its work with the National Bureau of Standards on the survey of can sizes being conducted by its Division of Simplified Practice and to explore the possibilities of using the results of these studies as a basis for a trade practice conference, no action to be taken before reporting back to the Board of Directors.

Approved recommendations embodied in the report of the Labeling Committee with respect to suggested descriptive terms for canned tomatoes and canned peas, providing for reference of these terms to the tomato and pea canners, and to further work by the committee and the Research Laboratory in the development of descriptive terms and research on objective tests.

Approved the recommendation of a subcommittee of the Home Economics Committee that the public relations work be conducted through the Association's own organization by expansion of the activities of the Home Economics Division and the Committee on Statistics and Information, by promotion of publicity work by commodity groups of the Association, and by the preparation of appropriate material on the industry and its products for use by individual members of the industry.

Approved a recommendation that conferences be held with distributors' organizations with a view to the adoption of improved rules of arbitration and that publication of the projected bulletin on arbitration be deferred until these rules have been approved by the respective organizations.

Authorized appointment of a committee to consider the application of Federal and State unemployment statutes to seasonal labor in the canning industry.

Fixed the date of the next annual convention for the week of January 22, 1939.

Received report of the Legislative Committee on the status

of pending Federal legislation affecting the canning industry.

#### President Mayer's Introductory Remarks

In his introductory remarks President Karl Kuner Mayer expressed his hope that there would be full and free discussion of the various subjects to come before the Board. He commended the courage of the industry in attacking the difficult problems with which it is confronted, and expressed the confident belief that the industry is heading in the right direction and will work out satisfactory solutions. In both membership and finances the Association, he said, continues in excellent shape. President Mayer reviewed briefly the visits he had made since the convention to meetings of canners and distributors, also his visit at Association headquarters, which, at his suggestion, had prepared a chart showing the Association's form of organization and activities. This chart, in draft form, was on exhibit at the meeting, and it is planned to reproduce it in a size appropriate for distribution to all members.

#### Judge Covington Speaks

Following the introductory remarks by President Mayer, the Board heard a reassuring talk by Judge J. Harry Covington of Association's counsel. He emphasized the fact that while everyone is disturbed over the upset in our national economy, a depression is not something unique. They have occurred in times past; they will occur in the future; for thus far the world has not solved the problem of the business cycle. Government in itself cannot permanently destroy, nor can it permanently uplift the national economy. The canning industry, he said, will be the first to benefit from an up-swing in business because food is one of the three essentials—food, raiment, and shelter.

Canners have a greater right to assume an optimism for the future than any other industry in the length and breadth of this country. It is more and more necessary that the canner of America maintain his business in a highly organ-

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#### CONGRESS SUMMARY

##### House Begins Consideration of Wage-Hour Bill— Senate Debates Relief

The Congressional calendars now clear of all annual departmental appropriation bills, the House and, Senate went to work Monday on the two remaining major legislative proposals—relief appropriations and labor standards. While the Senate began final debate on the President's recommended recovery and relief program, the House, on Representative Norton's motion, voted to begin immediate consideration of the wage and hour bill.

In redrafted form, the Senate Education and Labor Committee favorably reported on May 18th Senator Walsh's

proposal (S. 2165) to reinforce and broaden the scope of the Walsh-Healey Government Contracts Act.

The principal changes contemplated by the reported measure are (1) extension of the provisions of the Act to all contracts with the Federal government in excess of \$2,000 (the present limit is \$10,000), subcontracts where the amount equals or exceeds \$500, contracts for services, and contracts for vessels and floating equipment; (2) placing on the ineligible list bidders persistently remaining in violation of the National Labor Relations Act; (3) requiring contractors to submit certificates from their subcontractors that they will comply with the Act; and (4) permitting the employment of minors of 16 but prohibiting the employment of all minors under 18 in hazardous occupations or industries.

The Senate passed and sent to the President on May 18 a House bill (H. R. 8148) which will exempt sales to eleemosynary institutions from the restrictions of the Robinson-Patman Price Discrimination Act.

A bill (H. R. 10650) authorizing appropriations for a five-year building program for the United States Bureau of Fisheries received the approval of the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries last week and will be reported to the House early this week.

### TO REVIEW FLORIDA LAW

#### Supreme Court Acts on Appeal from Lower Court's Ruling on Embossing Law

On Monday, May 16, 1938, the United States Supreme Court noted "probable jurisdiction" in an appeal filed by a group of Florida grapefruit canners from a ruling of a lower Federal court dismissing an injunction suit against the enforcement of the Florida embossing and labeling law. This means that next Fall the Supreme Court will determine whether there was error in dismissing the injunction suit without permitting it to go to trial on the question of its constitutionality under the Federal and State constitutions.

The Florida law, enacted in June, 1937, requires that (1) every can of citrus fruit or citrus juice packed in Florida must be labeled to show the State or country in which the fruit was produced, and (2) that every can of Florida citrus fruits must be stamped or embossed with the word "Florida." The Florida Citrus Commission is authorized to determine the method and manner of labeling or embossing. In September, 1937, the Commission announced that an educational and adjustment period would be needed before the labeling provisions should be enforced. On the other hand, after some delay, the Commission, on October 14, 1937, decided that on and after November 1, 1937, each can would have to be embossed with the word "Florida" in letters not less than three-sixteenths of an inch in height.

On October 25, 1937, a group of Florida grapefruit canners filed an injunction suit and secured a temporary restraining order. After a hearing, the three-judge Federal District Court, on February 1, 1938, dismissed the bill of complaint on the ground that the statute was not invalid either under the constitution of Florida or the Federal Constitution. One judge dissented. Thereafter, the grapefruit canners filed an appeal in the Supreme Court and in the meantime the lower court granted a further restraining order until the appeal could be determined.

### Krimendahl Heads Statistics Committee

President Karl Kuner Mayer has appointed Mr. H. F. Krimendahl of Celina, Ohio, as chairman of the Committee on Statistics and Information, which chairmanship had been held by Mr. Mayer prior to his election as president of the Association.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

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ized manner because of increasing competition with both raw foods and frozen foods. By and large, the canner can meet that competition successfully but only if he continues research in perfecting canned foods so that his product will always be characterized by wholesomeness and ease of acquisition, and be low in price.

### Review of Association's Activities

Secretary Gorrell spoke briefly in introducing the review of the Association's work presented by members of the staff in charge of various departments. He said:

"We are meeting today in the midst of a period of unsatisfactory business conditions, whether you choose to call it a depression, a recession, or what not. Naturally there is a tendency to give more thought to our troubles than to any encouraging features there may be in the situation. However, I have been deeply impressed by the industry's confidence in its future despite unsatisfactory business conditions, which confidence is evidenced by additions to the Association's membership, by the promptness with which the membership is paying its dues, and by the general interest that is being shown in the Association's activities.

"I want to assure every member of the Association that those entrusted with the direction of the Association's activities, and every member of the staff, is deeply appreciative of this attitude. The industry and the Association in times past have encountered problems that taxed their every resource, and on each occasion these problems have been successfully met. I wish also to assure every member that the work of the Association will be carried on throughout the year as competently as it can be done, and always with every effort to husband the Association's resources and make every dollar paid in membership dues produce a dollar's worth of value in service to the industry."

The reviews by members of the staff appear on page 5538.

### Budget for 1938

The final budget for 1938 as recommended by the Administrative Council was presented by Mr. Marc C. Hutchinson, Chairman of the Executive Committee. His report showed that the case basis for assessment of 1938 dues amounted to 125,300,000 cases of seasonal and 35,000,000 cases of non-seasonal products. Expenditures to May 15 under the provisional budget had totaled \$177,032, and the recommended budget for the year was \$482,188, including several minor increases over the provisional budget to take care of new work developing since the first of the year. The budget as recommended was approved.

### Simplification of Containers

Chairman Wilder of the Committee on Simplification of Containers presented a preliminary analysis of partial returns in the can size survey being conducted by the Division of Simplified Practice of the National Bureau of Standards. The reports included in the analysis gave sufficient figures to show the general trend that may be expected from complete data for the country. They revealed that for products like peas, corn, tomatoes, peaches, pears, and apricots, about 95 per cent or more of the output will be found to have been packed in five sizes of cans or fewer. With newer products like fruit and vegetable juices, the number of sizes used is larger and the proportion packed in a few sizes of cans is less.

If the complete tabulation bears out the situation indicated by the preliminary analysis, Chairman Wilder reported that the Committee would be prepared to recommend for adoption as standard the sizes of cans now actually in use in a large way.

In its work in the survey the Committee is proceeding on the basis that, by whatever method simplification is to be attained, it should be by commodities rather than for canned products as a whole.

Following presentation of the Committee's report, it was the subject of extended discussion, participated in by all of the various interests represented in the meeting, including can manufacturers. There was also extended discussion of the policy of the Association in handling the problem, as the result of which the following motion was adopted:

"That the Committee on Simplification of Containers continue its work with the National Bureau of Standards of the Department of Commerce and explore the possibility of using the results of these studies as a basis for a trade practice conference, no action to be taken before reporting back to the Board of Directors."

### Legislation

Chairman Walter L. Graefe of the Legislative Committee presented a report upon the status of legislation and the activities of the Committee during the present session of Congress. He outlined the situation with respect to the wage and hour bill scheduled to come up for consideration on May 23, and explained the position the Committee had taken upon the necessity of canners being exempted from the hours provision of the Norton bill.

### Labeling Committee

The Labeling Committee at its meeting on Wednesday took up first the subject of suggested descriptive terms for canned tomatoes, and the following terms for color were recommended for submission to the various State associations for immediate use by the industry: "Light Red," "Red," "Deep Red." The Research Laboratory was requested to work with the Tomato Labeling Committee in the establishment of suitable color standards to define the three groups.

For the condition of the solid portion of tomatoes the Committee agreed upon the following terms: "Packed Whole in Juice," "Packed Whole or in Large Pieces," "Packed Whole or in Pieces," "Solid Pack." The last named term is to be defined by the per cent of drained weight, and tomatoes not packed in juice may be designated solid pack if they meet the drained weight requirement.

With respect to canned peas, the Committee recommended that a letter be sent to all canners furnishing suggested terms for maturity for immediate use, along with tentative definitions of these limits, as set by the alcohol insoluble solids tests, for trial by the industry. The terms recommended are "Very Young," "Young," "Nearly Mature." In this connection the letter will ask canners for further samples to be tested by the Laboratory.

It was reported to the Committee that the Laboratory has arranged to obtain information about the change in the size of peas during processing.

Progress was reported to the Committee on the tests for maturity for whole kernel corn and plans have been made for further study of the consistency of cream style corn.

The Committee requested that Mr. Howard Smith of the Research Laboratory work with the respective subcommittees to develop both terms and objective tests for canned foods on which no action or only preliminary action has been taken.

The Committee suggested that revision of the bulletin giving terms for descriptive labeling be deferred until the Fall.

The Chairman of the Committee was authorized to direct a letter to canners of red cherries asking that they seek a decision as to the correct name of their product, whether "Red Sour Pitted Cherries" or "Pitted Red Cherries."

On the question of the designation of green asparagus as "All Green," or "Green," it was arranged that the views of asparagus canners be ascertained.

### Report on Public Relations

The report of the subcommittee of the Home Economics Committee, appointed to make a study of the public relations question, was presented by Mr. Dan F. Gerber, chairman of the subcommittee. After reviewing briefly the sources from which information had been sought, the report stated that the subcommittee had come to these general conclusions:

1. The National Canners Association has done more than most trade associations in the matter of public relations, but by comparison with the possibilities this gives the Association no basis for a feeling of self satisfaction, but rather serves to point the way to what can be done with an organized effort.

2. We have an industry of whose progress and development we can be justly proud and products of which we can likewise be proud. It is our job to use every available means to give the public—that is, the consumers, the growers of canners' crops, and the employes of our plants—the unvarnished facts without exaggeration or misrepresentation.

3. The public relations job is one of details and not of large gestures. It is simply the utilization of every available means to present the truth about the industry and its products in such a way as to convince the public of the sincerity of our purpose.

4. There is no basic formula for this work applicable to all industries and all trade groups. Each industry must make its program to fit its own needs, its own means, and its own organization, utilizing so far as possible the services of its own members.

5. With the Association now engaged in various public relations activities, it seems desirable that further work be based upon expansion of these activities, addition of such

new lines of work as may be necessary, and the coordination of all activities in a well-rounded program.

The public relations work should be organized as an integral part of the Association's program of activities, and be under the Association's direction.

Employment of outside counsel should await further development of the program, which may or may not demonstrate the need of service that the Association cannot provide through its own organization.

6. The program should be developed on a basis that has due regard for the Association and industry finances.

The subcommittee had the following specific recommendations to make with respect to the public relations program:

1. Further research by the Division of Statistics on the facts underlying relations between canners and growers and canners and their employees with no attempt to deal with the matter of raw product prices or wage levels, results of this research to be made available to canners for their information and use in meeting individual problems and situations. One important purpose of this research work is to bring to the grower and the laborer the facts that canning is a national industry and that local problems must be worked out with the national background always in view, and that the ultimate arbiter in the whole question is the public that buys the industry's products.

2. Extension of present work of the Home Economics Division as opportunity and available funds permit with the object of reaching an increasing number of consumers and consumers' organizations, and professional and educational groups that are in position to inform the public.

In connection with the Home Economics Division's work a study would be made of the possibility of commodity groups financing special commodity publications and educational motion pictures, with the National Canners Association serving as the central agency through which the publications and films can be distributed. This survey might well include the obtaining of information as to schools having motion picture equipment, both 16 and 35 millimeter, and sound or silent.

3. Preparation for canners of authentic information on the canning industry and its products that will be suitable for use by members of the industry in addressees, conferences, local newspaper publicity, and other mediums that reach the public.

#### Statistics and Information

The report of the Committee on Statistics and Information was presented to the Board by Mr. Carlos Campbell, Director of the Association's Division of Statistics. The Committee at its meeting approved extension of the canner-grower studies to additional products when the canners of these products request that the work be done and give the necessary cooperation in the conduct of the studies. The director of the Division was authorized to extend the canning cost studies to additional products, if in his judgment such work should be done. Cooperation in the public relations work of the Association was approved, and the Committee likewise approved the collection of photographs of canning industry operations for use in educational work. Attention was called to the survey on labor statistics by the Department of Labor, which will soon send out questionnaires to the canning in-

dustry. The statistics are being sought primarily for use in connection with administration of the Walsh-Healey Act.

#### Arbitration

Progress was reported in the preparation of the projected bulletin on arbitration by Mr. H. Thomas Austern of the Association's counsel, who recommended that conferences be held with various distributors' associations to discuss the adoption of improved arbitration rules. In accordance with this recommendation the Board approved a resolution "that the Secretary and counsel be authorized to discuss with the secretaries and counsel of the various distributors' associations the adoption of improved arbitration rules; that after such rules have been approved by these distributing organizations, they be subject to approval by the Executive Officers of the Association; and that thereafter a bulletin be prepared and circulated describing in simple language the operation of these rules and the method whereby canners may, in the event of any dispute, readily utilize arbitration."

#### Seasonal Labor and Unemployment Compensation

Ever since the enactment of the Federal Social Security Act on August 14, 1935, there has been considerable agitation in the canning industry for administrative or legislative action to exempt from the taxing provisions of this Act the labor employed in seasonal canning operations. Counsel for the Association have recently undertaken a comprehensive study of this problem, and have submitted a lengthy and complex report surveying the application of unemployment compensation statutes to canning industry seasonal labor and making a number of recommendations as to the action which the Association should take. The conclusions reached by Counsel and their recommendations were summarized to the Board by Mr. E. M. Nuckols of Association's Counsel, as follows:

1. *There is no possibility of securing an administrative exemption of seasonal workers, but amendments to both state and federal statutes will be necessary.* Many canners seem to have entertained the belief that an exemption for seasonal labor can be obtained by simply applying to State and Federal administrative officials. This is not the case. Title IX of the Federal act and the various State statutes specifically apply to all canning industry labor, whether year round or seasonal, and an exemption can be obtained only by amending the statutes. Moreover, an amendment to the Federal and all of the State statutes will be necessary to afford complete exemption—as an amendment to the Federal Act alone would still leave such labor subject to State taxes, and vice versa.

2. *Attempts to secure statutory exemptions at this time are not likely to be successful.* It is unlikely that Congress will enact any amendments to the Federal Social Security Act at any time in the immediate future, as thus far Congress has evidenced a marked resistance to any changes in this statute. Although the Act has been a Federal law for almost three years, not one amendment of its provisions has yet been adopted by Congress, and this is true although hundreds of bills seeking amendments have been introduced in the three regular and one special sessions of Congress which have had the opportunity to adopt amendments.

Moreover, there will be an even more pronounced congressional resistance to any changes in the statute which will

decrease its coverage by exempting additional classes of workers. The general tendency at the present time seems to be in the direction of extending rather than decreasing the Act's coverage, and it may be expected that the Social Security Board and many members of Congress will be opposed to any exemptions for seasonal workers.

It seems likely that the Social Security Board will itself propose amendments, designed to cure administrative defects in the statute, at some time within the next year or so. It is believed that efforts to secure statutory exemptions should be deferred until the Board has made its recommendations, and they are the subject of congressional consideration. At that time the Association should be prepared to submit a strong factual brief in support of its claim for exemption.

3. *It is impossible to forecast the extent to which canning industry seasonal labor will be able to qualify for unemployment benefits, and a more extended study is necessary.* In view of the resistance which will be encountered in Congress to amendments exempting additional classes of workers from the statutes, it is obvious that, if any efforts to procure exemptions are to be successful, it will be necessary to demonstrate convincingly that canning industry seasonal labor will rarely, if ever, qualify for benefits. But on the basis of present knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the employment of seasonal labor, and the present experience with the benefit provisions of the State statutes, it is impossible to predict whether such workers will qualify for benefits in many instances or not. The State statutes all require, as a condition to the payment of benefits, that the claimants have performed a specified amount of work, for which taxes were paid, before becoming unemployed. The exact amount of work required varies with the individual states, but in general it may be said that most states require the equivalent of eight full weeks work during the preceding year. This requirement will undoubtedly prevent many of the farmers, housewives, and children who are temporarily employed during the packing season from ever qualifying for benefits.

It seems probable, however, that there is another class of seasonal workers in the canning industry which will be able to qualify for benefits, perhaps in a substantial number of instances. In some areas, particularly the larger industrial areas, many of the laborers who work in canning plants during the packing season, will be employed in other industries during the remainder of the year. Such workers could clearly accumulate the requisite amount of work, and if they became unemployed, could qualify for benefits. The numbers of such workers employed by the canning industry is not known.

Moreover, many states have special statutory provisions regulating the payment of benefits to seasonal workers. The effect of these provisions on canning industry seasonal labor is not at all clear, but it seems possible that they may tend to increase the benefits payable to such seasonal workers.

Consequently, a more thorough study of the problem, based upon the actual experience in those states now paying benefits, will be necessary before it can be determined whether the Association is in a position to seek an amendment, or if so, what type of an amendment should be sought.

4. *There is a possibility that canners may be able to qualify*

*for future reductions in tax rates in those states with adequate merit-rating provisions in their statutes.* If it develops that canning industry seasonal employees will not be able to qualify for benefits in many instances, it is quite probable that this fact will be reflected in rate reductions for canners in future years. Most states have provisions in their statutes authorizing such reductions to employers whose employees have not qualified for benefits in many instances. The statutes provide, in general, that a separate account shall be maintained for each employer to which will be credited all of the taxes paid by him, and against which will be charged all benefits paid to his former employees. Beginning in 1941 and 1942 employers who have paid in more in taxes in past years than has been paid out to their employees in benefits may qualify for reduced tax rates. The rates will vary from zero to 2.7 per cent depending upon the extent to which the taxes paid in in past years by the employer exceed the benefits paid to his employees. If canning industry seasonal employees do not qualify for benefits, it is likely that canners will pay taxes considerably in excess of the benefits charged against their accounts, and thus will be able to qualify for rate reductions.

This possibility may afford the ultimate solution to the problem of canning industry seasonal labor. If it develops that no statutory exemptions can be obtained, the Association may be able, by a careful study of the requirements for rate reductions, to recommend technical amendments to state statutes which will increase the chances of canners qualifying for lower rates. This possibility should, therefore, be thoroughly explored.

5. *No attempt should be made to secure amendments to state statutes exempting seasonal labor until such an amendment to Title IX of the Federal Act has been first procured.* It seems clear that no attempts to secure amendments to state statutes exempting seasonal labor should be made at the present time. For if an amendment to a state statute were obtained, and it then developed that no amendment to the Federal Act could be procured, the position of the canning industry would be much worse than it now is. It would be compelled to pay a straight 3 per cent tax on seasonal labor under Title IX of the Federal Act, and there would be no possibility of future rate reductions because of good benefit experiences, since merit-rating provisions are found only in the state statutes.

6. *Recommendations.*—On the basis of the foregoing discussion the following recommendations are offered:

1. That the Association at this time initiate no action toward securing an amendment to the Federal or any of the State statutes completely to exempt seasonal employment in the canning industry.

2. That the Board of Directors authorize the appointment of a special committee to consider the application of these statutes to seasonal labor in the industry, which committee shall do the following:

(a) Consider what further information concerning the employment of seasonal workers in the canning industry will be necessary in order to determine, if possible, a comprehensive program for the entire industry.

(b) Supervise the collection of information from the Federal Social Security Board and state agencies concerning seasonal employment, payment of benefits to employees in the canning industry, and other relevant data; and devise

methods of obtaining from the industry itself additional information deemed necessary for an adequate study.

(c) Enlist the cooperation of the various state and regional associations in the gathering of these facts and in the formulation of a program.

(d) Consider whether or not the industry through the Association should seek an amendment and the proper time to request it.

(e) Make a thorough study of the possibility of future rate reductions under the merit-rating provisions of the state statutes, with a view to suggesting possible technical amendments to state statutes which will increase the possibility of reductions, and with a view to the publication of a bulletin which will indicate to members of the industry ways of increasing the extent of the reductions.

Following presentation of the foregoing summary and recommendations, the Board unanimously adopted a resolution—"that the President appoint a special committee to consider the application of Federal and State unemployment compensation statutes to seasonal labor in the canning industry, which committee shall develop a comprehensive program for the canning industry, secure necessary information in cooperation with the various state and regional associations, and develop recommendations for such action as it believes will effectively reduce the tax burden under such statutes."

#### Convention Date and Location

The Board voted to hold the next annual convention the week of January 22, 1939. President Mayer, who was authorized by a resolution adopted at the convention in January to determine the location of the convention, asked for an expression from individual members of the Board, stating that he wished to have all the information he could obtain as to canners' views before making his decision.

#### Strickland Gillilan a Guest at Luncheon

At the luncheon on Thursday noon, Mr. Strickland Gillilan, noted writer and speaker, was a guest, and kindly consented to make a brief talk in which he told a number of stories in his inimitable style, including the recitation of the famous poem he wrote—"Finnigin to Flannigan," which ends with the oft-quoted line "Off agin, on agin, gone agin, Finnigin."

#### Australian Peach Pack Reaches Record High

Final figures on the Australian pack of canned peaches for the 1938 season are higher than the 1937 previous record pack, according to a report dated April 29 from the office of the American trade commissioner at Sydney. The 1938 pack of 1,790,500 cases of 24 thirty-ounce cans is 370,000 cases higher than the preliminary estimates given for the 1938 season, and 396,642 cases larger than the 1937 pack of 1,393,858 cases.

Large plantings of peaches and pears have been made during the past five years, and some of these orchards are now bearing. Within the next three or four years it is anticipated that sufficient apricots, peaches, and pears for canning will be available to yield an aggregate pack of at least 3½ million cases, as compared with between 2 and 2½ million cases during the past three years.

### REVIEW OF ASSOCIATION'S ACTIVITIES

#### Research Laboratories

##### BACTERIOLOGICAL WORK

The bacteriological work of the Research Laboratory includes laboratory and field projects, and thus far in 1938 the laboratory program has centered principally on a new method for determining the heat resistance of highly resistant bacterial spores. The new procedure promises to be of particular value in the conduct of processing studies.

The new field laboratory truck has been equipped and is now in use in connection with studies on asparagus. Within the near future the laboratory will go to the Middle West for survey work on peas and corn. Subsequently, it is planned to do special work on tomato juice in the Northeast section. Activity will end with the corn pack in Maine, where work will be done on chlorination of cooling water.

Since the beginning of the year, the Laboratory has supplied expert testimony in connection with ten trials of consumer complaint cases.

#### RESEARCH WITH THE TENDEROMETER

The Laboratory has been asked to continue the research with the tenderometer begun by Dr. William McK. Martin of the Research Department of the American Can Company. A series of experiments has been outlined that will continue through the entire pea season from the earliest in the Southern States to the latest in the Northern States.

#### WORK FOR THE LABELING COMMITTEES

The Laboratory has been asked by the Pea Labeling Committee to conduct experiments to show the relation of tenderometer readings on raw peas to the canning quality of the peas and the alcohol insoluble solids tests. As many pea canning varieties and methods of canning will be covered as time will permit.

The Corn Labeling Committee has asked the Laboratory to continue maturity studies on whole grain brine pack and vacuum pack corn, and to carry on studies with reference to the factory control of the consistency of cream-style corn.

From time to time a question arises about the change in size of peas during blanching and processing. Recently the matter came up in connection with a rejection of peas because of slight shrinkage of the peas during canning operations. Special screens have been prepared with which to study more closely the change in size of different varieties and grades of peas under various conditions.

#### TECHNICIANS' SCHOOL AT PURDUE UNIVERSITY

The Laboratory has been requested to take charge of the instruction in mold count and insect fragment count at the Indiana Canners Technicians' School again this year. The permanent mold count slides that were so helpful last year are being extended this year. A study has been made of the insect count method, and it is believed that certain changes in the method of applying the procedure will make it possible to operate in a more satisfactory manner.

### VITAMIN C IN GRAPEFRUIT JUICE

During the winter months the technique developed during studies of vitamin C in the manufacture of tomato juice was extended to the manufacture of grapefruit juice in a number of factories of Association members located in Florida. Samples of raw grapefruit juice, the juice during its several stages of preparation and the finished canned product were tested for vitamin C content. Such destruction as occurred was traced to equipment or methods of handling the juice which incorporated air into the juice. Almost complete retention of vitamin C was found possible under commercial conditions when proper precautions were taken to eliminate air. The survey was extended to include orange juice and blends of orange and grapefruit juices at factories which were packing those products.

### DETERMINATION OF FREE AMMONIA IN CANNED SARDINES

The amount of free ammonia in meat and fish products has been used as a criterion with respect to spoilage. The method ordinarily employed for this determination includes the simple amines present as well as free ammonia. Errors are sometimes made, especially perhaps by certain South American governments, in judging imported canned sardines on the basis of the tests just mentioned.

During the past winter this question has been studied in the Research Laboratory, and the only method available for the determination of free ammonia, as distinguished from simple amines, has been greatly improved. The method developed in the Research Laboratory will be prepared for publication and will be brought to the attention of the next meeting of the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists, with the suggestion that it be adopted by that Association. It will also be published in a scientific journal for the use of analysts in other laboratories.

### LABORATORY SERVICE WORK

Certain types of service work recur quite regularly in the Laboratory's service to members and these have made up a considerable part of service activity during the early part of the year. Most service requests involve finding the cause of some abnormality such as spoilage, discoloration or off-flavor, tests for sterility or compliance with various local requirements and examination of raw materials or supplies.

During the last two seasons many samples of insecticides for use in fighting pea aphid have been tested for rotenone content. The use of such materials is increasing, and the laboratories will probably have an increased amount of this work to handle during the present season.

Assistance is frequently given member canners in the development of appropriate processes for sterilizing products canned by new procedures.

### Raw Products Research Bureau

The work of the Raw Products Bureau is carried on by field study and observation of experiments conducted by Federal and State experiment stations; by conferences with research workers in these agencies in the effort to enlist their interest and active help in solving canning crop problems; by encouraging and assisting in the development of canners' schools at State agricultural colleges; and by preparing and distributing

to the membership of the Association a printed report summarizing the current results of research work in progress at the State and Federal experiment stations. The Bureau also renders direct service to members through studying some of their production problems in the field, and by assembling information for them concerning particular questions of seed, varieties, or insect and disease control.

Field study of canners' crops and of experiment station projects will be carried on during the growing season. Field work planned this summer includes visits to the Middle West and East in connection with study of canning crop projects of the experiment stations in several of these States. In New York and Wisconsin studies are being conducted on boron deficiency of beets, variety tests of peas, pea-aphid control, and on hybrid and other sweet corn varieties. In New Jersey real progress is being made in applying the results of quick soil tests to tomato improvement. The progress of the new tomato fruit worm project, initiated by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in cooperation with Purdue University in Indiana, will also be watched with interest.

### CANNERS' SCHOOLS

Canners' schools have been held since the last canning season in Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, Wisconsin, and Utah. Obviously it has not been possible for the Director to be present at all of them, but he has attended as many as possible. These schools usually last for two or three days, although in some cases the period may be a week or more. Research workers in the institution conducting the school, present results of studies along specific lines, which apply to the industry's crop problems, and which the canners and their field men have a particular interest in hearing discussed. The growing number of these schools, and the large attendance they usually attract from the industry, indicates the practical value of the information to be derived from them.

There is also a by-product in connection with such schools that has often proved of value. This is in the opportunity they afford for acquaintance with the industry's problems through these contacts between scientists, canners, and field men. The schools also give canners better appreciation of the many ways in which college and experiment stations may be helpful in connection with the growers' problems.

The Director of the Bureau is often called upon for assistance in organizing the programs for these schools and in selecting speakers best qualified to present special topics.

### PUBLICATIONS ON RAW PRODUCTS

The Bureau prepared, just before the last convention, its third report on Agricultural Research Relating to Canning Crops. These reports cover research work in progress at State and Federal experiment stations which is of particular interest to canners. The latest report also contains, as heretofore, a descriptive list of new bulletins and circulars issued by these institutions. The Bureau has been gratified to note the considerable increase this year in the number of canners who have requested additional copies for the use of themselves and their field men.

The Bureau also has prepared and distributed to corn canners since convention a small printed bulletin entitled "Hybrid Sweet Corn for Canning." Questions regarding

hybrid sweet corn have arisen in the minds of many canners, particularly since Golden Cross Bantam has come into such wide use in the canning industry. Consequently, it was thought desirable to assemble information on this subject to answer some of these questions. Copies of this bulletin are still available, if members desire additional ones for field men or growers.

The Bureau has on hand mimeographed statements it has prepared on production methods for lima beans, string beans, carrots, pumpkin and squash, beets and okra. More could be prepared. The six already on hand, if continued, should be revised and brought up to date. The Bureau has recently written to members of the Association to ascertain the degree of their interest in such statements. If the demand justifies, these could be printed in the form of short bulletins. If members of the Association feel that such publications are useful, time not devoted to field work and other activities of the Bureau during the summer and fall could be utilized in their preparation.

#### Division of Statistics

##### PACK STATISTICS

Pack statistics for 1937, which were assembled and tabulated during late 1937 and early 1938, were checked, revised where necessary, and published in two bulletins: "1937 Canned Food Pack Statistics, Part 1—Vegetables," and "Part 2—Fruits."

For this second bulletin, most of the figures are assembled by the following State associations: New York State Canners Association, New York; Canners League of California, California; Florida Canners Association, Florida; Northwest Canners Association, Washington and Oregon; Utah Canners Association, Utah. The figures for all other States were assembled by the Division of Statistics directly from canners. This arrangement is fairly satisfactory except that the publication of the fruit bulletin is delayed each year until about the first week of May, the date on which the Oregon and Washington figures become available.

##### STOCKS AND SHIPMENT STATISTICS

Most of the Division's statistical work consists of assembling and reporting statistics on stocks and shipments of the following commodities: Corn, peas, tomatoes, green and wax beans, lima beans, beets, and red pitted cherries.

From time to time, at the request of the industry, the Division of Statistics has expanded its stocks reporting service to make more frequent reports. The present schedule provides for monthly reports during the marketing period for corn, peas, tomatoes and red pitted cherries, and for quarterly reports for green and wax beans, beets, and lima beans. The handling of this expanded service by the Division's staff has been made possible by the standardization of request blanks and the establishment of a uniform type of report.

The work has also been facilitated by some improvement in cooperation from canners, both from the standpoint of numbers reporting and promptness in reporting. In this expanded service, canners are called upon more frequently to make reports, but every effort has been made to simplify the request schedules and thus reduce to a minimum canners' work in making reports. It is hoped that further improvements along this line may be accomplished.

##### SERVICE WORK

The Division of Statistics attempts to keep on file current and historical statistics relating to the canning industry, regardless of the source from which they are derived. From these files numerous inquiries from individual canners are answered. The Division endeavors to assemble the data necessary to meet an individual request and to put it in the tabular form best suited for the needs of the canner making the inquiry. This work has grown steadily since the Division was formed four years ago, and now a considerable part of the time of the Division's staff is devoted to this type of service work.

##### TOMATO CANNING COST STUDY

In an attempt to secure comparable data on the cost of canning tomatoes in various canning sections, the Division of Statistics secured the cooperation of a number of tomato canners last season. Detailed schedules were prepared by the Division and filled in by the cooperating canners, and the data were compiled by the Division and reported in tabular form to the canners making reports. However, only 25 canners filled in these schedules, and of the 25 only 17 were in suitable form to be used in compiling the data. They were, however, well distributed throughout the United States.

The primary purpose of this study is to be able to present in detail the individual items of cost on a comparable basis so that the individual canner may compare his various items of cost with the average for the industry or for his section, with the object of improving his efficiency in operation and in reducing costs.

##### SIMPLIFICATION OF CONTAINERS

The Division of Statistics has cooperated with the National Bureau of Standards in preparing schedules to assemble complete data on the number of the various can sizes used in packing each of the canned fruits and vegetables. It has also assisted in the tabulation of these data.

##### RESEARCH STUDIES

In order to perform the service work which the Division of Statistics is called upon to do, it is necessary to have a background of information regarding fluctuation in demand, relationship between competitive food supplies and prices, etc. To keep up to date in this work, it is necessary from time to time to devote some time to economic research in these fields. Some of this work has been done during the last month, and more of it will be done during the summer months when the statistical work is not so heavy.

##### Consumer Complaint Service

While it was hoped last year that the number of consumer complaints reported by members was on the decrease, there has been a return to the situation prevailing in 1936, which was a record year. For the first four months of 1936 and 1938 about 900 new complaints were reported and, on the basis of the 1936 figures, a total of about 2,025 new cases may be expected this year. Undoubtedly the present situation is due largely to the widespread unemployment and the business depression, which lead many to resort to methods, which they would not consider under normal conditions, in an attempt to secure some money by fair means or foul.

Of 45 suits taken into court, 27 resulted in verdicts for the defense, 6 were dismissed, and 12 turned out in favor of the plaintiff. Suits pending in the Association's hands on May 1st number 377.

It is the policy of the Association to deal frankly and fairly with consumers who report complaints in good faith, even though they may be mistaken in their conclusions. On account of the difficulties often encountered in obtaining convincing evidence as to the honesty of a complaint, the problem of how to handle a case is often a difficult one.

Take, for example, the writers of the following letters—two women of evidently wholly different types, both apparently mistaken, but making their complaints in good faith. The first letter is addressed to a chain store and the second to the Association.

"Gentlemen: I have received a letter from the National Canners Association informing me that no adjustment can be made in the matter of the complaint which I registered with you.

"In reviewing this matter it becomes apparent that had I taken a different course at the outset the conclusions reached in the matter would have been different. There are, of course, ways in which such matters may be handled. First, there is the unprincipled method employed by persons who are out to get something for nothing, of hiring a lawyer who with the aid of manufactured evidence takes action immediately; this often results in a great deal of undesirable publicity. Second, one can go about one's neighborhood casting reflections on the store and its products, causing loss of business and placing the store manager and the store in disrepute. Third, there is the ethical approach, that of making a complaint to the store manager, with sufficient evidence behind it to prove one's case. I preferred to take the third course, and I approached the manager of your store in good faith.

"I understand that a woman found a nail in food purchased from that same store where I bought the beans. She entered a complaint with you, you recognized the justness of it and apparently accepted responsibility for it, by giving her a quantity of merchandise of substantial value. Yet in her case no actual injury to anyone resulted. In my case, I suffered the discomforts of a three-day illness, and lost two days from business with possible jeopardy to my position. I would like to inquire wherein lies the logic or fairness of material adjustment in the one case where no injury resulted, as against the actual, proven illness in another case.

"The National Canners Association claims my illness was not caused by the beans, yet my physician's diagnosis proves otherwise, and I have witnesses to substantiate all the statements I have made with regard to my illness.

"I believe you have a definite responsibility in this matter and I would like to ask whether you believe you have discharged it faithfully.

"I am not satisfied with the handling of the matter so far and I would like to hear from you further in this connection."

At the Association's suggestion, the chain store wrote this woman a courteous letter explaining its position and the absence of any liability for the illness since the can of food was apparently all right when opened.

Another typical letter is as follows:

"Dear Sir: Am in receipt of your letter in which you state the company concluded that they are not liable for the product.

"Let me have my say doesn't the public have the right to buy eatables to eat without getting ill? We are paying for that protection by spending money on the item to be eaten

& not to suffer as I have it is not my fault the peas when opened were sour it was most unfortunate but that does not mean that your company should take such merciless & unfair attitude in this case. Your not concerned about any-one suffering from the ill effects of the product which was to be found in good standing your caliber is of such which proves from your letter that your concerned about yourself only and no regards for the good people who buy your put-up product.

"If this happened to your wife & family I venture to say you would kick & kick plenty. I was in bed for two whole days.

"It is too bad you take a I-don't-care attitude there must be a stone where your heart should be.

"It's wonderful there is so much competition or we would still have to cater to the one's we try to stay away from."

Since the investigation indicated that the peas were not the cause of illness, it was felt that nothing would be gained by replying to this letter.

It is a source of considerable satisfaction to be able to report that the work of the Association in handling these claims is much appreciated by distributors generally, as well as by canners, and that more and more the distributors are indicating their desire to avail themselves of the service.

The Research Laboratories not only in Washington, but also in San Francisco and Seattle, continue to give this department splendid cooperation and assistance, without which the difficulty of successful investigation and defense of unjust claims would be greatly increased.

#### Home Economics Division

The questionnaire, asking what informational material on canned foods and the canning industry was available in the schools and public libraries of the community, and also what instruction was being given about the industry in schools, which was sent out in February by the Home Economics Division, has brought a good response.

Replies have been received from 296 communities in 39 States, as well as Alaska, Puerto Rico and Hawaii. Of the libraries reported upon, 171 did not have informational material of the National Canners Association; 27 had the information. In every case where the material was lacking the libraries were glad to receive it. Of the school libraries, 305 did not have the Association's material, and 95 schools had part of or all the material.

In some cases canners were able to send lists of all Home Economics teachers in their county or State who wished to receive material from the Division.

Some firms having branch offices sent questionnaires to their branches, thus giving a more complete coverage.

The cooperation of the State secretaries in furthering interest in this questionnaire was outstanding. One State association, at its own expense, circularized its entire membership. Every company in its territory was sent a questionnaire with the result that a greater response came from that territory.

In order to continue interest in consumer relations, the Division is planning to send a questionnaire in the Fall to cover women's organizations. Through this questionnaire it is hoped that activities of these organizations along consumer education lines, will be determined as well as whether

or not they would like material from the Association which would be suitable for club programs.

The literature of the Division will be exhibited this year for the first time at two professional meetings. The first one will be the American Home Economics Association annual meeting at Pittsburgh, June 28 to July 1; the other will be the American Dietetic Association meeting in Milwaukee, the week of October 9.

A new leaflet entitled, "Information for the Canned Foods Shopper", will be featured at the Pittsburgh exhibit, and a new institutional recipe booklet is expected to be ready in time for the Dietetic meeting. The recipes for this were developed at Kansas State College in their Institutional Administration Department.

The opening of the Service Kitchen of the Home Economics Division offers new opportunities for the department to serve the industry. The kitchen is located on the third floor of the Association headquarters.

The object of this service is to develop recipes for the members of the National Canners Association by using their own products, so that each recipe will be adapted to individual packs.

As local stores often do not carry the entire line packed by members it will be necessary to have the foods to be included in recipes sent to the kitchen direct from the packer. Requests will be filled in the order in which they are received.

In addition to individual services to members, recipes will be developed by the Division for its own publications. The first of these will be a booklet of family-size recipes to take the place of "227 Tested Recipes for Canned Foods."

It is hoped that the kitchen service will be used by every member of the Association, and a cordial invitation is extended to members to visit the kitchen.

#### Information Division

To carry out the purpose of the resolution adopted by the Board of Directors at its meeting in January, recommending that canners accept individual responsibility for creating in their own communities a better understanding of the industry, its policies, and its problems, through contacts with organized groups, public addresses and other means, the Association sent a copy of the resolution to all members with a letter offering to furnish publications and other material that would be helpful in this work.

The response to the letter and resolution quickly revealed that the Association would have to prepare material for canners' use in making addresses, radio talks, and so on. The Association's publications, of course, contain most of the information needed in the preparation of addresses, but this information needs to be put together in such form that it can be readily adapted to various uses.

There is in preparation—most of it in draft form—a series of about 25 separate articles dealing with practically every important phase of the industry and its products. Plans are to print them as separates and to furnish with each article a list of references to sources of further information.

The Canning Machinery and Supplies Association and the National Food Brokers Association have sent the Board's resolution to their members and have expressed their desire

to cooperate fully with our organization in carrying on this important work.

An increasing number of requests is being received by the Association for material to be used in the preparation of newspaper and magazine articles on the canning industry, advertising literature, theses in college work, etc.

#### "AMERICAN FOOD IN THE JUNGLE"

##### **Mrs. Martin Johnson Tells How She Used Canned Foods on Exploration Trips**

"We carried every variety of American canned food—vegetables, fruits, soups, soft drinks, evaporated milk, jellies, pickles, olives, pimientos—everything that you would have at home." This was the way Mrs. Martin Johnson managed to provide her husband, the late explorer, with the best American dishes, she tells in an interview with Grace Turner in the May 8 issue of "This Week," a weekly magazine circulated as a section in many Sunday newspapers. Featured in the article is Mrs. Johnson's recipe for peach cream pie.

Mrs. Johnson outlined a typical menu for a jungle dinner: "We'd begin with an hors d'oeuvre of caviar or anchovies," she says. "Then a soup—let us say cream of potato, made most deliciously with canned milk. For the meat course, there might well be broiled breast of guinea hen or creamed guinea hen à l'Africa, as I named it. I'd have wild rice with this, canned green beans, or canned asparagus with Hollandaise sauce. And for dessert, probably a peach cream pie, again made with canned milk and canned peaches."

Last year in the May "Cosmopolitan," Mrs. Johnson related in greater detail her experiences with canned foods for a "Jungle Dinner". Excerpts from this article appeared in No. 648 of the INFORMATION LETTER.

#### Food Technology Course

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has announced a short intensive course in food technology to be offered in the 1938 summer session from June 13 to July 1. This course is intended particularly for persons having at their disposal limited time for study, who wish to broaden their perspective in food fields or to increase their technical abilities. The fundamental material of the course will cover the origin, composition, transportation, handling, storage, processing, and control of the more important animal and plant foods, with emphasis on the chemical, biological, and engineering factors relating thereto. Canning is included as one of the eight principal branches of the food industry to be covered.

Tuition fee for the course is \$55. For further information concerning registration for this course communications should be sent to Professor B. E. Proctor, Room 10-485, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

#### Frost Affects Food Supplies in England

American canned fruits and vegetables probably will be needed to make up deficit in England, caused by the extensive damage of April frosts in Worcestershire, according to a report of the American consulate at Birmingham under

date of April 22. The county's total 1938 fruit and vegetable yield amounts to not much more than half that of 1937. It would appear that no crop in the county has escaped.

British canners, who normally depend upon Worcestershire for supplies, will be hard hit by the shortage. Dealers' local supplies will be limited seriously. It is expected, the consular report states, that canned plums, pears, gooseberries, and asparagus will figure prominently among products imported during the winter of 1938-39 to make up for shortages.

### Fruit and Vegetable Market Competition

Carlot Shipments as reported by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Department of Agriculture

	Week ending—		Season total to—		
	May 14, 1937	May 14, 1938	May 7, 1938	May 14, 1937	May 14, 1938
<b>VEGETABLES</b>					
Beans, snap and lima	301	314	422	6,291	6,814
Tomatoes	816	1,510	1,373	9,066	14,460
Green peas	349	207	311	2,275	2,769
Spinach	51	7	9	8,091	6,457
Others:					
Domestic, competing directly	5,593	5,421	5,256	115,089	111,472
Imports competing—					
Directly	10	1	5	430	431
Indirectly	6	3	3	2,341	1,718
<b>FRUITS</b>					
Citrus, domestic	3,194	4,834	4,080	105,888	113,543
Imports	14	1	1	153	127
Others, domestic	1,224	760	488	23,197	23,582

### Veterans Administration to Buy Canned Fruits

The Procurement Division of the Veterans Administration is asking for bids, to be opened on June 15, 1938, on 3,150 dozen No. 10 cans of red sour pitted cherries (Montmorency variety) packed six to the case, of which 1,000 dozen are for delivery f.o.b. Perryville, Maryland, 650 dozen f.o.b. San Francisco, and 1,500 dozen f.o.b. Chicago.

The Procurement Division is also asking for bids, to be opened on June 16 on 1,700 dozen cans of crushed pineapple, 4,600 dozen cans of sliced pineapple, and 2,150 dozen cans of pineapple juice, all No. 10 cans packed six to the case. Deliveries are to be made f.o.b. destinations as follows:

	Crushed Doz. Cans	Sliced Doz. Cans	Juice Doz. Cans
Perryville	550	1,250	400
San Francisco	400	1,850	650
Chicago	750	1,500	1,100

Bids are to be opened on June 17 on 2,700 dozen No. 10 cans of cherries (Royal Anne variety) packed six to the case, 1,050 dozen cans for delivery f.o.b. Perryville, Maryland, 850 dozen f.o.b. San Francisco, and 800 dozen f.o.b. Chicago.

Copies of the invitations, including specifications and general conditions, may be obtained by communicating with A. J. Harrison, Acting Chief of the Procurement Division, Veterans Administration, Arlington Building, Washington, D. C.

### Canned Pea Shipments

Shipments of peas out of canners' hands during April totaled 1,233,225 cases, compared with 931,039 cases for April, 1937. Part of the April shipments this year, however, were shipped on government contracts. The movement to the regular trade was slightly larger than a year ago, amounting to 941,587 cases. Shipments on government contracts during April totaled 291,638 cases.

The total shipments on government contracts to May 1 totaled 848,840 cases. Since the first of May about 12,000 cases have been shipped on government contracts, making the total a little over 860,000 cases. Of this total, 22,655 cases were No. 10's and the remainder No. 2's.

The following table gives the shipments by months on government contracts for each of the principal marketing areas affected:

	February Cases	March Cases	April Cases	Total Cases
Middle Atlantic	71,066	59,176	49,555	179,797
Mid-West	61,138	350,872	222,267	634,277
Western	.....	14,950	19,816	34,766
Total	132,204	424,998	291,638	848,840

During the eleven months, June 1, 1937, to May 1, 1938, canners shipped 19,777,024 cases of peas, compared with 17,041,509 cases for the corresponding period a year earlier. It will be noted from the above table, however, that 848,840 cases were shipped on government contracts, leaving a total of 18,928,184 cases shipped to the regular trade. Thus the movement through regular trade channels up to May 1 was 1,886,675 cases larger than for the corresponding period of the previous year and about the same as the movement in 1935-36.

### Condition of the Cherry Crop

Prospects in the Eastern commercial cherry States were reduced materially by the early April freezes according to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Low temperatures resulted in considerable damage to sweet cherries in New York, and indications point to a light crop. Sour cherries apparently were not injured seriously and a relatively good crop is in prospect. In Pennsylvania, sweet cherries bloomed early and were almost a total loss in many sections as a result of freezing temperatures in April. Sour cherries, however, were not in bloom, and escaped serious damage. Prospects are for a light crop of cherries in Ohio. In Michigan, sour cherry prospects were reduced materially during April in both the Grand Traverse region and in the southwestern counties. Injury to sweet cherries to May 1, however, apparently was not so extensive, but low temperatures since May 1 have caused severe damage to all cherries. Freeze damage in Idaho has been negligible and conditions are generally favorable. Prospects in Colorado on May 1 were the best in several years. On the nights of May 6 and 7, however, low temperatures resulted in serious damage to cherries in the important Ft. Collins-Loveland area. It is too early to determine the full extent of damage but it is probable there will be a light crop in this section. In the Pacific Northwest the bloom was heavy and present prospects are favorable for a good crop. California cherries are

developing later than usual, but current indications point to a larger crop than was produced in 1937. The crop outlook in Utah is favorable.

### April Rural Retail Sales Below Year Ago

Daily average sales of general merchandise in small towns and rural areas for April were about 7½ per cent below April, 1937, according to estimates of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce released May 18. The estimates are based on rural chain store and mail order sales.

Sales increased about 9½ per cent from March to April, or considerably more than the usual amount at this season of the year. The seasonally adjusted index therefore advanced to 112.3 for April on the basis of the average for the years 1929-31 as 100, from 105.8 for March.

Sales for the first four months of the year were 8 per cent below the same period of 1937. April sales without allowance for the number of business days were about 8 per cent below April of last year.

### Wholesale and Retail Prices

The following indexes on wholesale and retail prices are the latest now available. For wholesale prices 1926 is taken as 100 per cent, while for retail prices, 1923-25 is taken as 100 per cent.

	Wholesale prices				
	April 23, 1938	April 16, 1938	April 9, 1938	April 2, 1938	April 24, 1937
All commodities...	78.6	78.6	78.5	78.8	87.5
All foods.....	72.2	72.3	72.2	72.6	85.0
Retail prices					
	March 15, 1938	Feb. 15, 1938	March 16, 1937	March 15, 1933	
All foods.....	78.6	78.4	85.4	59.8	
Fresh fruits and vegetables.....	56.6	56.9	80.1	51.4	
Canned fruits and vegetables.....	79.1	79.4	82.6	65.3	

### Potato Marketing Agreement and Order

A marketing agreement program for Irish potatoes grown in the five Gulf States became effective May 12, through a marketing order issued by the Secretary of Agriculture and approved by the President. In the grower referendum held recently, potato producers of this area approved the order.

The marketing agreement and order are applicable to all potato handlers in 114 counties in Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, and Louisiana. The program will terminate July 31, 1938.

### Prospects for Pears

Growing conditions were favorable during April in most of the important pear producing areas, according to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. In the North Atlantic states the bloom was good. There has been little freeze damage and prospects are for good crops in these states. In the North Central states, prospects range from good to poor. Good crops are indicated in Indiana and Iowa, but freeze

damage since May 1 has probably reduced prospective production in Michigan. April freezes materially reduced the crop in Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, and Kansas. In the South Atlantic states indications point to good pear crops except in Virginia, where considerable damage resulted from April freezes. Some of the South Central states show a light set of fruit as a result of the low temperatures. Conditions are generally favorable in the Pacific Northwest. The bloom was heavy and present indications point to good pear crops. It is too early, however, to determine what the final fruit set may be. Orchard work has been delayed and considerable insect damage may result later in the season. In California the outlook for pears is good. The bloom was heavy and growing conditions during April were favorable, but it is yet too early to determine the final set of fruit. Prospects in the Rocky Mountain states are relatively favorable.

### Shipments of Australian Soft Fruits to London

During the past fruit-growing season in Australia shipments of peaches, apricots, plums, and cherries, and Queensland pineapples and meat were made successfully from that country to London in a ship equipped with special gas-filled chambers, according to the American trade commissioner at Sydney. Arrangements are now being made for the erection of a special storehouse in London where fresh fruit from Australia will be stored for release in market quantities, according to the report.

### Pamphlet on Florida Citrus Industry Released

"Recent Changes in the Florida Citrus Industry" are reviewed in a pamphlet by that title released by the Marketing Division of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. The leaflet discusses briefly, with the aid of graphs, some of the economic factors bearing on the production and marketing of Florida oranges and grapefruit. Of particular interest to canners is the section dealing with disposition of Florida grapefruit, indicating amount of total used for canning, and the increased volume of grapefruit canned in Florida and in all areas.

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